

Bernard-Stevens, to open on the bill.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Senator Lindsay explained the bill very well but there was no opposition in committee. The Department of Social Services did have a concern that the way the green copy was drafted they would have to make a computer change which would have been expensive. But the amendment we just agreed to took that, worded it such that they do not have to make that computer change now, so that cost of the computer change went away. This basically says that the department will still continue to collect the monies or arrearages in child support that had not been paid to the mother, that were back...that were owed to the mother, but now with the child's a portion...a part of the state, the state would collect all of that. But it also then says that after the child is returned to the family, that portion that was owed the mother prior to the child becoming a portion...a part of the state would be returned. So the mother actually would be getting those dollars that she would have normally gotten if the child support or spousal support payments would have been made on time. It's a fairness issue. The department agreed with that and I urge adoption of the amendment or the bill.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. You've heard the opening. Senator Witek, to debate LB 524 on its advancement.

SENATOR WITEK: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, Senator Bernard-Stevens, I wonder if you would be open to just a couple of questions.

SENATOR HALL: Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Yes, ma'am.

SENATOR WITEK: According to the fiscal note on this, this is almost a million dollars.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: No, that's what the amendment just agreed to. The fiscal note was...the high cost was the change in the computer that they would have to do all the change in programming and all the paper work. With the committee amendment that we agreed to, working with Social Services, that portion of all the computer costs goes away.